(b) A Russian delegation visited India in September, 2005. The delegation made a presentation on Indo-Russian Company Rosoboron service to the Indian side.

(c) to (e) A US delegation visited India in September, 2005 and held discussions on the Indian Navy's proposal for acquisition of defence equipment and platforms. No agreement was concluded with the US delegation.

Sale of 30 ALH to Chile

1543. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is selling its indigenous built 30 Advance Light Helicopters (Dhruv) to Chile;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that it is the first and the single largest sale by the Indian Defence Establishment; and

(c) who were the other contenders for this deal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The Dhruv Helicopter manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has been trial evaluated, along with certain other helicopters of major manufacturers, by the Chilean authorities. However, no purchases have been made.

Special Cell for securing release of POWs

1544. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that family members of 54 soldiers believed to be in Pakistan jails since the 1965 and 1971 wars have demanded that Government set up a special cell to work on bringing them back; and

(b) the action Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Government have been taking up the matter of the release of Indian Prisoners of Wars with Pakistan through diplomatic channels and during

high level visits from time to time. The matter was taken up by our Prime Minister with the Pakistan Prime Minister during the latter's visit to Delhi from November 23-24, 2004 and also during the visit of President Musharraf to India from April 16-18, 2005. However, Pakistan has never acknowledged the presence of any Indian Prisoners of Wars in its jails.

In pursuance of the efforts of locating Indian Prisoners of Wars, the Government took up the matter with Pakistan Government for sending a delegation of the families of the missing defence personnel on a visit to various jails in Pakistan to facilitate identification of Indian Prisoners of War but this has not been accepted by Pakistan. A similar delegation had visited Pakistan in September, 1983 but it was given limited access and could not locate any Indian Prisoners of War.

Various proposals including setting of a special cell to look into the matters of Prisoners of Wars in Pakistan have been received, but would be useful only if Pakistan agrees to engages in further discussions on the issue.

Defence production Units

1545. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up defence production units in the country particularly in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the time by when those units are likely to be set up; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Ordnance factories are set up to meet the sustained long-term demand of arms and ammunition and other military stores of the Armed Forces. The existing capacity of the Ordnance Factories is sufficient to meet the existing requirement of the Armed Forces.